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Aug. 20, 1998

Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20554

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Subject: Reply Comments Related to General Docket No. 98-68

Dear Sir:

This communication represents reply comments of **RETLIF TESTING LABORATORIES** with regards to previously filed comments and opinions from other entities related to the above referenced Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM).

RETLIF TESTING LABORATORIES is a 20 year old conformity assessment testing organization specializing in Electromagnetic Interference (EMC), Telecommunications, Product Safety and Environmental Simulation testing services. In addition to its main laboratory and corporate headquarters located in Ronkonkoma, Long Island, NY, **RETLIF** maintains additional testing facilities in Goffstown, NH and East Brunswick, NJ, an engineering office in Southfield, MI and a regulatory compliance office in Arlington, VA.

We continue to support the Commission's proposal with regards to the development and designation of Telecommunications Certification Bodies (TCB) and the concept of the transfer of much of the current approval process to the private sector and we continue to affirm the comments made in our July 20, 1998 filing.

However, we have had the opportunity to review many of the comments filed by other individuals, organizations and associations and would like to make comments related to two issues which were repeatedly commented on.

#1 The Use of Private Sector Accreditors

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and several other organizations suggested the use of private sector accreditors as opposed to NIST/NVCase citing the desire for "competition". We are confused. Currently there is only one ISO Guide 65 accreditation program offered by an American accrediting bodies and that is the ANSI program. We hardly think that one program offered by one body represents competition. It is specifically for this reason that we again

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recommend that NIST/NVCASE be the initial accreditor for TCBs during the transition period. At worst, at the end of the transition period we will wind up with two accrediting bodies NIST/NVCASE and ANSI who we assume would easily be able to offer the program developed by NIST/NVCASE and endorsed by the FCC.

Further addressing this point, is the issue that the program suggested by the FCC is not a "true" third party certification program. Such a program would involve the sale of certification labels and scheduled follow-up visits or inspections, both of which are not currently part of the suggested program. Traditional ISO Guide 65 accreditation programs, such as the one offered by ANSI, are based on such an approach and in fact have a fee structure based on the number of labels a certifier sells.

The uniqueness of this program, both in its focused technical competence and modified third party certification approach, speak clearly to a "custom designed" program, which we feel can be best developed through a close NIST/NVCASE and FCC relationship during the transition period.

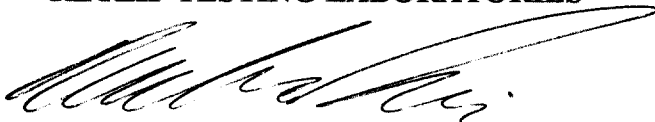
#2 Allowing Manufacturer's Laboratories to Become TCBs

Rockwell and others have raised the issue that manufacturers' in-house laboratories should also be allowed to become TCBs. We agree. If such a laboratory can meet the technical requirements for both ISO Guides 25 and 65 **as well as the independence** requirements in ISO Guide 65 they should be allowed to operate as a TCB. In fact not allowing such is somewhat confusing in light of recent FCC rulings allowing for approvals based on manufacturer's Declarations of Conformity. Clearly the danger of interference is greater with regards to the products covered by this NPRM, however in our opinion, meaningful enforcement practices by the Commission would be sufficient to keep the system in check regardless if the TCB is an independent laboratory or a manufacturer's in-house laboratory.

We hope that the comments and opinion presented will be of help and thank the Commission for the opportunity to present them.

Very truly yours,

RETLIF TESTING LABORATORIES



Walter A. Poggi
President

WAP/ap

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